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LARSON CALLS ON CONGRESS TO END WASTEFUL EXTRA ENGINE PROGRAM

Washington, DC – Today, Congressman John B. Larson (*CT-01*), Chairman of the House Democratic Caucus, spoke out against the Extra Engine Program for the Joint Strike Fighter, a program that wastes taxpayer dollars, costs American jobs and diverts needed resources away from our troops when they need them most.

“The extra engine program is exactly the sort of wasteful government spending that people across the country are so angry about. Ending it would save money *and* save at least 5,000 American jobs.□ It is time we stand with our military and American manufacturing base and put an end to this wasteful spending.□ We’re fighting two wars and facing a looming budget deficit and every taxpayer dollar we spend is precious.□ Instead of wasting money on a program that the White House and Defense Department have both labeled as unnecessary and wasteful, we should be putting it towards the equipment our men and women in uniform really need to keep us safe,”
said Larson.

General Electric and their UK-based partner Rolls Royce are hoping to continue developing their multi-billion dollar extra engine for the Joint Strike Fighter – leading to job creation in the UK that has already been touted in the English press at the expense of at least 5,000 jobs here in America.

Defense Secretary Robert Gates has come out strongly against the extra engine program, saying, **“We have reached a critical point in this debate where spending more money on a second engine for the JSF is unnecessary, wasteful, and simply diverts precious modernization funds from other more pressing priorities.”**

The White House has threatened to veto the legislation that authorizes the military if the extra engine program is included. President Obama and this Congress have worked hard to reduce the waste, fraud and abuse in government spending and this program is a perfect example of the sort of wasteful spending that Washington needs to eliminate.

This past August, President Obama said, **“Every dollar wasted in our defense budget is a dollar we can’t spend to care for our troops, or protect America or prepare for the future. If a project doesn’t support our troops, if it does not make America safer, we will not fund it.”**

Congressman Larson echoed that sentiment, saying, **“A vote against the extra engine program is an excellent opportunity for us to show the American people whose side we’re on. Are we on the side of protecting taxpayer dollars and ensuring they are spent wisely and carefully, or are we on the side of padding the profits of big corporations – particularly foreign corporations? I’m on the side of the American taxpayer. The President, Secretary Gates and I are of one mind on this and I intend to work with them to end this wasteful program.”**

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